

EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

PUBLIC AFFAIRS SECTION

TEL: 880-2-883-7150-4

FAX: 880-2-9881677, 9885688

E-MAIL: DhakaPA@state.gov

WEBSITE: <http://dhaka.usembassy.gov>

PRESS RELEASE

U.S. SPONSORS SUNDARBANS MANAGEMENT DISCUSSION IN KHULNA

KHULNA, APRIL 18 -- The United State Government sponsored a dialog in Khulna today on the future management of the Sundarbans Reserve Forest. U.S. Ambassador to Bangladesh James F. Moriarty; Asaduzzaman Noor, MP; Md. Shah Alam, Secretary, Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock; Dr. Mihir Kanti Mazumder, Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Forest; Md. Delwar Hossain, Secretary, Ministry of Land and USAID Mission Director Denise Rollins participated in the discussion.

Today's discussion brought together groups with significant interests in the Sundarbans Reserve Forest, including civil society leaders, members of the business community, government officials, and local residents to present ideas for developing a long-term Sundarbans management plan. The Forest Department and local communities will jointly manage resources in the Sundarbans. Ambassador Moriarty commended the Government of Bangladesh for its willingness to join hands with local communities to protect and conserve the invaluable resources and rich biodiversity of the Sundarbans. Ambassador Moriarty reiterated the U.S. Government's commitment to preserve protected areas such as the Sundarbans and help Bangladesh develop in an environmentally responsible manner.

In 2008, the U.S. Government initiated a US\$ 12.7 million environment program called the Integrated Protected Area Co-management (IPAC) project. There are IPAC project sites near Sylhet, Teknaf, Modhupur, the Sundarbans and the Chittagong Hill Tracts. IPAC will contribute to sustainable natural resource management and conserve forests and wetlands while creating income opportunities for 2.2 million people who live in and around these important natural resources.

=====

GR/2009